

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DAKAR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3047
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAKAR 1581

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, SS, SG, AG
SUBJECT: BOUMEDIENE SENDS MESSAGE TO SENGHOR

1. SUMMARY: ALGERIAN FORMER MINISTER AND DEPUTY ABDELKADER ZAIBEK DELIVERED MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE TO PRESIDENT SENGHOR FEBRUARY 27 AND MADE COMPLIMENTARY PUBLIC REMARKS ABOUT SENGHOR'S INDISPENSABILITY AT PROPOSED EXTRAORDINARY OAU SUMMIT ON SAHARA. ALGERIA MAY BE MAKING EFFORT TO PATCH UP STRAINED RELATIONS WITH SENEGAL BY PLAYING UP TO SENGHOR AND DRAWING OUT HIS IDEAS FOR RESOLUTION OF SAHARA CONFLICT. END SUMMARY.

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

2. ABDELKADER ZAIBEK, FORMER MINISTER AND VICE PRESIDENT OF ALGERIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, ARRIVED IN SENEGAL FEBRUARY 27 AND MET SAME DAY WITH PRESIDENT SENGHOR TO DELIVER "PERSONAL MESSAGE" FROM PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE.

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3. IN SUBSEQUENT INTERVIEW BROADCAST BY RADIO SENEGAL FEBRUARY 28, ZAIBEK INDICATED THAT MESSAGE CONCERNED EXTRAORDINARY OAU SESSION (ON WESTERN SAHARA) "WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE" IN LIBREVILLE MARCH 26-30. ZAIBEK SAID ALGERIA SOUGHT SENGHOR'S PRESENCE TO HELP ENSURE THAT SESSION WOULD LEAD TO JUST AND DURABLE SETTLEMENT. HE NOTED ALGERIA'S SUPPORT OF UN RESOLUTIONS ON DECOLONIZATION, ESPECIALLY

THOSE DEMANDING CONSULTATION OF THE PARTIES INVOLVED AND RESPECT FOR TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. ZAIBEK SAID THAT ALGERIA WAS WORKING "IN VERY ACTIVE FASHION" FOR THE LIBREVILLE SESSION, SO THAT SETTLEMENT COULD BE FOUND IN AFRICA BY AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

4. ZAIBEK WAS EXTREMELY SOLICITOUS OF SENGHOR IN BROADCAST REMARKS, EXPRESSING APPRECIATION THAT SENEGALESE PRESIDENT HAD RECEIVED HIM SO SOON AFTER FEBRUARY 26 NATIONAL ELECTIONS, CITING SENGHOR'S "EXTREME COMPREHENSION" AND INDICATING THAT HIS MISSION TO DAKAR FELL INTO FRAMEWORK OF ALGERIA'S CONSULTATION WITH "BROTHER AND FRIENDLY COUNTRIES." END UNCLASSIFIED.

5. COMMENT: OF COURSE, WHAT ZAIBEK'S VISIT REALLY FELL IN FRAMEWORK OF WAS CLIMATE OF BILATERAL MISTRUST REFLECTED IN SENGHOR'S DENUNCIATIONS OF ALGERIA'S ETHNIC IMPERIALISM IN SAHARA (DAKAR 190). ALGERIAN AMBASSADOR BOUDERBA REPORTEDLY HAD REMARKED TO COLLEAGUE A FEW DAYS EARLIER THAT HE DID NOT KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER HE COULD HOLD OUT IN DAKAR IN PRESENT ATMOSPHERE. ZAIBEK'S MISSION AND POLITE TENOR OF HIS PUBLIC REMAKRS SUGGEST ALGERIAN INITIATIVE TO PATCH UP RELATIONS. EMBASSY RECALLS THAT MUCH OF SENGHOR'S BITTERNESS STEMMED FROM ALGERIAN REJECTION OF HIS MEDIATION EFFORTS OF LAST FALL WHICH INCLUDED PROPOSAL FOR SEPARATE REFERENDA IN MOROCCAN
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AND MAURITANIAN WESTERN SAHARA SUPERVISED BY UN, OAU AND ARAB LEAGUE. HOWEVER, BOUDERBA HIMSELF INITIALLY INDICATED SOME INTEREST IN SENGHOR'S IDEAS (77 DAKAR 6722). POSSIBILITY THUS EXISTS THAT ALGERIANS MIGHT HAVE DECIDED TO PLAY UP TO SENGHOR BY EXPRESSING BELATED INTEREST IN HIS VIEWS ON RESOLVING SAHARA CONFLICT. WE WILL REPORT ANY EVIDENCE WE UNCOVER TO SUPPORT OR REFUTE THIS HYPOTHESIS.
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